

**NOAA FISHERIES
PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION OFFICE (PIRO)
EFH ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET FOR
FEDERAL AGENCIES**

(11/2010)

Introduction:

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act mandates that federal agencies conduct an EFH consultation with NOAA Fisheries regarding any of their actions authorized, funded, or undertaken that may adversely effect essential fish habitat (EFH). An adverse effect means any impact that reduces the quality and/or quantity of EFH. Adverse effects may include direct or indirect physical, chemical, or biological alterations of the waters or substrate and loss of, or injury to, benthic organisms, prey species and their habitat, and other ecosystem components. Adverse effects to EFH may result from actions occurring within EFH or outside of EFH and may include site-specific or habitat-wide impacts including individual, cumulative, or synergistic consequences of actions.

This worksheet has been designed to assist Federal agencies in determining whether an EFH consultation is necessary, and developing the needed information should a consultation be required. This worksheet will lead you through a series of questions that will provide an initial screening to determine if an EFH consultation is necessary, and help you assemble the needed information for determining the extent of the consultation required. The information provided in this worksheet may also be used to develop the required EFH Assessment.

Consultation through NOAA Fisheries regarding other NOAA-trust resources may also be necessary if a proposed action results in adverse impacts. Part 6 of the worksheet is designed to help assess the effects of the action on other NOAA-trust resources. This helps maintain efficiency in our interagency coordination process. In addition, consultation with PIRO, Protected Resources Division (PRD) may be required if a proposed action impacts marine mammals or threatened and endangered. Staff from the PRD should be contacted regarding potential impacts to marine mammals or threatened and endangered species.

Instructions for Use:

An EFH Assessment must be submitted by a Federal agency to the Habitat Conservation Division (HCD) as part of the EFH consultation. An EFH Assessment must include the following information:

- 1) A description of the proposed action.
- 2) An analysis of the potential adverse effects of the action on EFH, and the MUS.
- 3) The Federal agency conclusions regarding the effects of the action on EFH.
- 4) Proposed mitigation if applicable.

In some cases, this worksheet can be used as an EFH Assessment. If the Federal agency determines that the action will not cause substantial impacts to EFH, then this worksheet may suffice. If the action may cause substantial adverse effects on EFH, then a more thorough discussion of the action and its impacts in a separate EFH Assessment will be necessary. The completed worksheet should be forwarded to HCD for review.

The information contained on the HCD website will assist you in completing this worksheet. The HCD website contains information regarding: EFH consultation process; EFH Maps; MUS Species Descriptions which provide important ecological information for each species and life stage; and other EFH reference documents.

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PROJECT NAME: _____ DATE: _____

PROJECT NO.: _____ LOCATION: _____

PREPARER: _____

Step 1. Use the Habitat Conservation Division EFH websites resources and other existing information to generate the list of designated EFH for MUS species for proposed project area. Use the species list as part of the initial screening process to determine if EFH for those species occurs in the vicinity of the proposed action. Attach that list to the worksheet because it will be used in later steps. Make a preliminary determination on the need to conduct an EFH Consultation.

1. INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS		
EFH Designations	Yes	No
Is the action located in or adjacent to EFH designated for eggs?		
Is the action located in or adjacent to EFH designated for larvae?		
Is the action located in or adjacent to EFH designated for juveniles?		
Is the action located in or adjacent to EFH designated for adults?		
Is the action located in or adjacent to EFH designated for spawning adults?		
If you answered no to all questions above, then EFH consultation is not required -go to Section 5. If you answered yes to any of the above questions proceed to Section 2 and complete remainder of the worksheet.		

Step 2. In order to assess impacts, it is critical to know the habitat characteristics of the site before the activity is undertaken. Use existing information, to the extent possible, in answering these questions. Please note that, there may be circumstances in which new information must be collected to appropriately characterize the site and assess impacts.

2. SITE CHARACTERISTICS	
Site Characteristics	Description
Is the site intertidal, sub-tidal, or water column?	
What are the sediment characteristics?	
Is Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC) designated at or near the site? If so what type, size, characteristics?	
Are there coral reef colonies at or adjacent to project site? If so describe the spatial extent.	
What is typical salinity and temperature regime/range?	
What is the normal frequency of site disturbance, both natural and man-made?	
What is the area of proposed impact (work footprint & far afield)?	

Step 3. This section is used to describe the anticipated impacts from the proposed action on the physical/chemical/biological environment at the project site and areas adjacent to the site that may be affected.

3. DESCRIPTION OF IMPACTS			
Impacts	Y	N	Description
Nature and duration of activity(s)			
Will benthic community be disturbed?			
Will coral reef colonies be impacted?			
Will sediments be altered and/or sedimentation rates change?			
Will turbidity increase?			
Will water depth change?			
Will contaminants be released into sediments or water column?			
Will tidal flow, currents or wave patterns be altered?			
Will ambient salinity or temperature regime change?			
Will water quality be altered?			

Step 4. This section is used to evaluate the consequences of the proposed action on the functions and values of EFH as well as the vulnerability of MUS and their life stages. Identify which species from the EFH species list (generated in Step 1) will be adversely impacted from the action. Assessment of EFH impacts should be based upon the site characteristics identified in Step 2 and the nature of the impacts described within Step 3. Determine the ecological parameters/preferences associated with each species listed and the potential impact to those parameters.

4. EFH ASSESSMENT			
Functions and Values	Y	N	Describe habitat type, species and life stages to be adversely impacted
Will functions and values of EFH be impacted for:			
Spawning			
Nursery			
Forage			
Shelter			
Will impacts be temporary or permanent?			
Will compensatory mitigation be used?			

Step 5. This section provides the Federal agency determination on the degree of impact to EFH from the proposed action. The EFH determination also dictates the type of EFH consultation that will be required with NOAA Fisheries.

5. DETERMINATION OF IMPACT		
	/	Federal Agency EFH Determination
Overall degree of adverse effects on EFH (not including compensatory mitigation) will be: (check the appropriate statement)		There is no adverse effect on EFH EFH Consultation is not required
		The adverse effect on EFH is not substantial. This is a request for an abbreviated EFH consultation. This worksheet is being submitted to NMFS to satisfy the EFH Assessment requirement.
		The adverse effect on EFH is substantial. This is a request for an expanded EFH consultation. A detailed written EFH assessment will be submitted to NMFS expanding upon the impacts revealed in this worksheet.

Step 6. Consultation with NOAA Fisheries may also be required if the proposed action results in adverse impacts to other NOAA-trust resources or their habitats. Inquiries regarding potential impacts to marine mammals or threatened/endangered species should be directed to PIRO Protected Resources Division.

6. OTHER NOAA-TRUST RESOURCES IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
Species known to occur at site (list others that may apply)	Describe habitat impact type (i.e., physical, chemical, or biological disruption of spawning and/or egg development habitat, juvenile nursery and/or adult feeding or migration habitat).
Bottlenose Dolphin <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	
Green Turtle <i>Chelonia mydas</i>	
Hawaiian Monk Seal <i>Monachus schauinslandi</i>	
Hawksbill Turtle <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	
Humpback Whale <i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	
Spinner Dolphin <i>Stenella longirostris</i>	
Other species:	